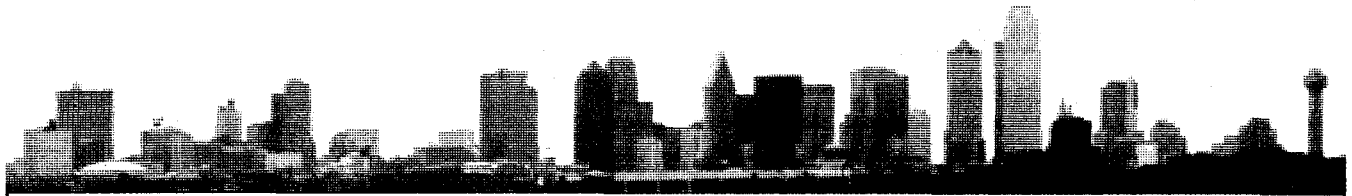


MCCC NEWS

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Dallas

CanDo Version 1.5

Major improvements to an already fantastic product
by Harold Williams

INOVAtronic's, Inc. has released a new version of their remarkable software authoring tool, *CanDo*. *CanDo* v1.5 comes on three disks packed with the *CanDo* software, a variety of utilities, over two dozen example decks (applications), and several text files with last minute documentation and information. Along with the disks there is a large 110 page supplement to the original manual. *CanDo* is a revolutionary concept that simplifies the creation of software. Its friendly interface lets you design applications that take advantage of the Amiga's powerful operating system without requiring you to have technical expertise.

The *CanDo* upgrade consists of several major new features such as database management tools, support for multiple windows, floating-point math, arrays and records. Other new features include new border styles (your applications can look like WorkBench 2.0), support for full screen animations, overscan screens, parallel-port control, improved ARexx control, improved brushanim support, a new sound sequencing capability and better error handling. The *CanDo* interface has also been reworked. The trademark sliding panel has been redrawn to create a crisper, more professional look. All of the pop-up screens have been redrawn and reorganized. The interface looks great and is actually more functional. The script editor has also been enhanced and now offers line-oriented cut and paste. The script editor now offers direct access to all "routine" scripts without returning to the main panel. The new version of *CanDo* is also faster than the previous version. Most new features are the direct result of requests by current *CanDo* users. As a result, most of the new features are aimed at experienced *CanDo* users.

The original *CanDo* did not offer support for real numbers – only integers. Support for floating-point was promised in the manual. The Amiga's IEEE double precision floating point operations are now fully supported. If your machine has a Motorola 68881/882

math co-processor *CanDo* will make use of it. All of the standard transcendental functions have been added. Trigonometric operations can be done with either degrees or radians. *CanDo* has a "pattern" display feature to simplify the presentation of real numbers. A pattern can be set that will determine characteristics like the number of digits to be displayed, the placement of the decimal point, leading plus/minus sign, leading zeros and trailing zeros. A unique aspect of the pattern feature is the ability to supply alternate patterns. Alternate patterns would be used when the original pattern causes an overflow condition.

CanDo's new array variables do not require declaration or dimensioning. When an array is referenced it is dynamically created. The arrays can be multi-dimensional. There are several new commands to simplify working with arrays, including a search command and a sort command. The new record variables are very similar to arrays. Record variables make a script more readable because names are used instead of numbers for the index. Records are created automatically with the new database functions.

The new database features are incredibly powerful yet simple to implement. A database is created by simply placing the objects (fields, documents, and buttons) that will be associated with the database records on the screen. Fields are items that contain a single line of data such as a name. Documents can contain multiple lines of data like a memo. Buttons return a logical value of "On" or "Off". Each database object must be named using a special naming convention. The object name must begin with a period (".") and be followed by a letter. A database record can then be created using the function GetDBObject. This function will cause a record to be created with all of the current values of the database objects. The database objects can be set to the values contained in an existing database record with the single command "SetDBObject". A sample deck named DBBaseDeck is provided that

Amazing Computers

This space was reserved for our normal Amazing Computer Ad, but I received a call from Sonia King of Amazing yesterday informing me that Amazing was no longer in existence. Sonia asked me to convey her thanks to all our members who have supported Amazing over the past years and to express her regrets that this action had to be taken.

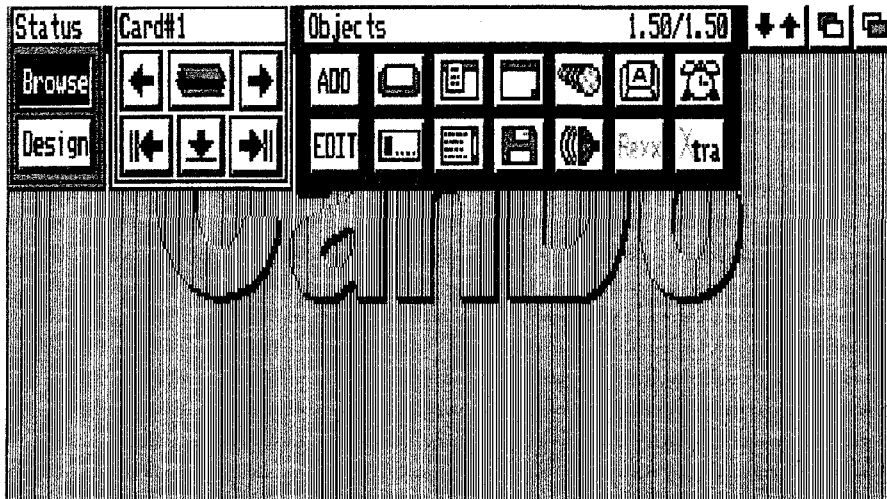
For my part, I would like to express my sorrow that we have lost this great local asset. Amazing has provided a great deal of support over the years to our organization and has provided us an excellent place to go see, touch, and try out the latest hardware and software. I don't think that there is a member who will not miss it.

On the brighter side, Sonia said that there is a possibility that we will see the formation of a new and just-as-amazing store sometime in the not-too-distant future. I hope so.

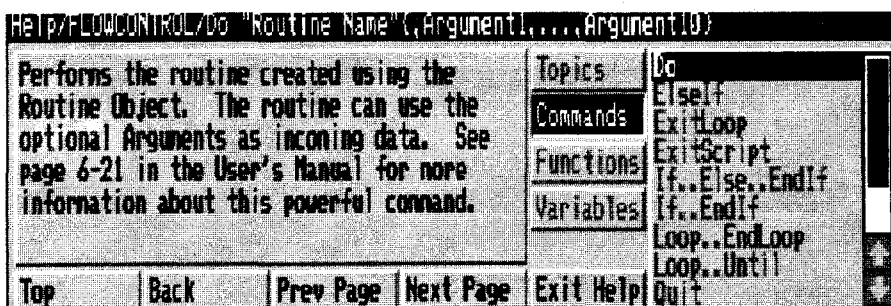
In the meantime, I would like to encourage you to visit and support our two remaining Amiga dealerships – Metropolitan in Richardson and Hard Warehouse in Hurst. And while in Hard Warehouse, you might like to try to convince them to keep the Amiga line since they too may drop it in the near future.

Good luck, Sonia... and thanks for all the support.

...Bill Raecke



CanDo's main panel showing the various object tools. The object tools include control the use of buttons, menus, windows, animation, keys, timers, fields, documents, disk activity, sounds, and ARexx. The Xtra tool includes an error handler object, a menu render object, and a right mouse button object.



CanDo has built-in help for every command. Simply double-clicking on a word in a script will bring up the help system.

serves as a starting point for creating a database application.

After a short time studying the manual I decided to try creating a simple address book style database. I began with the DBBaseDeck and added fields for name, address, city, state, zip code, and phone number. DBBaseDeck has buttons for adding and deleting database records, and also for moving forward and backward through the database. It has menu objects for loading and saving the database. In about ten minutes I had created a simple database application. The remarkable thing is it all worked! I decided to add a few more features. I added buttons to move to the first and last record in the database. I created a field that would search the database for a name. I added another button that would sort the database by name (this required a quick review of CanDo's sort command). All of these new buttons worked and the application was beginning to become fairly sophisticated. I decided to try one more thing. I added a list document to the screen. I modified the script that handled the loading of the database to write a list of all names in the database into the document. The list document was now a cross-reference of all names in the database. I added a script that would search for a name in the database when a name in the document was clicked on. Everything was working... until I tried saving the database and then reloading it. I was losing the last entry in the database! I finally realized that I needed to modify the original DBBaseDeck script that handled saving the database. It was automatically replacing the current record and my new features that allowed random access to the database records were causing the replace to misbehave. I found that this

auto-replace feature was used in most of the scripts built into the sample deck. I removed all of them and the problem was solved.

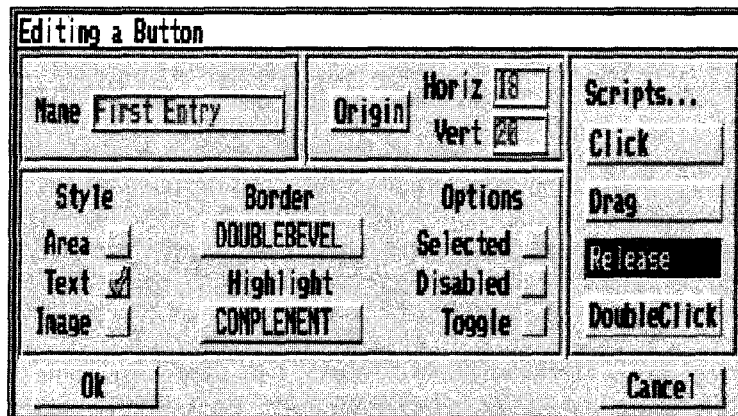
CanDo now supports multi-window applications. This is accomplished by running multiple decks. The original deck (ParentDeck) can launch other decks (SubDecks). The resulting decks can pass data back and forth with the ParentDeck. SubDecks can run other SubDecks. When a SubDeck is opened it can behave as a window or as a requester. Windows allow other windows to remain active, requesters do not allow activity in other windows until after the requester is closed.

There are new button objects and menu objects. Also there are several new border styles. Buttons can toggle. This feature is supported with a new check mark style button and a radio style button. Menu items can also be checked to indicate a selected option. The new border styles include bevel and double. These border styles are like the styles used on the new WorkBench 2.0. These new features along with multi-windows make *CanDo* applications look terrific.

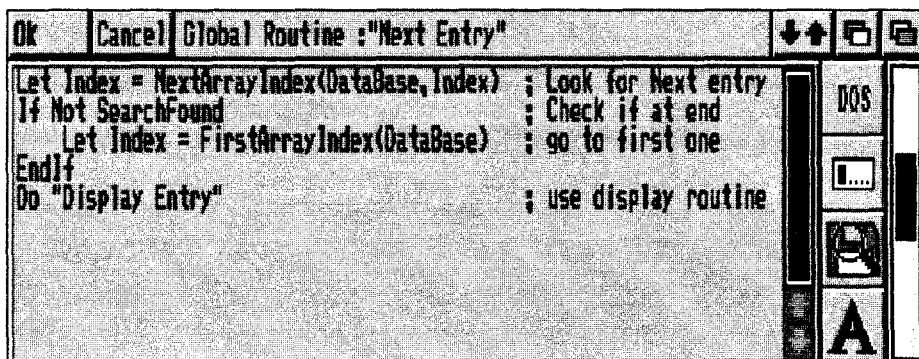
There are dozens of other additions and enhancements. It all adds up to a major improvement to a product that was already outstanding. A year and a half ago I wrote an article about the then new *CanDo* v1.01. I said it knocked my socks off. Well, v1.5 has done it again. But this time, they're stuck to the wall.

INOVAtrons is currently interested in marketing software that was developed with *CanDo*. Contact Martin Murray at (214) 340-4991.

NOTE: *CanDo* will be demonstrated this month at Amiga Central.



CanDo's button option panel determines the location and size of a button. The button can be associated with an area of the screen, it can contain text, or it can be a brush image. There are twelve border styles to choose from and three highlights. Buttons can be automatically selected, disabled or designed to toggle. Each button can have four scripts associated with different mouse activity.



The *CanDo* script editor. Notice the tool menu on the right. Much of the writing of scripts can be done by selecting a tool and using a point and click interface.

Life at 50

(Megahertz That Is!!!!)

by Johnny C. Kitchens

With the pending introduction of the 68040, an outstanding wave of performance, speed, and possibilities is yet to come for the Amiga. Until it finally shows up on the market though, the 50mhz 68030 rules these areas for the Amiga. Though the 50mhz was introduced several years ago, it didn't receive the fanfare that the 68040 has received in the past few months. The 50 has remained in the dark being overshadowed by the 68040 and lower-priced and slower-running 68030. There have even comments of it not being as good as the slower 030 due to the fact that it lacks the burst mode during memory fetches. The board comes with a 50mhz 68882 - a combination that is sure to make a speedy accelerator card for any computer. I decided to find out for myself.

GVP's 28mhz 68030 board had already impressed me for some time. Its performance improvement for the Amiga is very dramatic. Once you've tried it you can't go back. In the summer of 1990, GVP began offering the 50mhz board either new or as an upgrade to their existing board. This gave me two routes to take to get one. After juggling the possibilities I decided to sell my existing board and buy a new 50mhz board. I made a friend of mine very happy and I was satisfied. I ordered the board complete with 4 megs of memory and a 40 meg harddrive.

Unknown to me and still yet to be advertised, GVP late in 1990 decided to rework their 68030 accelerator cards. The main reason is to take advantage of new memory technology soon to show up in 1991. GVP has decided to make their board compatible with new 4 megabit chips while still making them compatible with existing 1 megabit chips. As a result, GVP no longer uses "Nibble Mode" memory and has switched completely to "Fast Page Mode" as the new chips are not available in "Nibble Mode" to date. One complaint about the GVP boards always had to do with the memory. Why do you have to buy memory in four meg increments? The reason was that they used "1Mbit x 8" SIMMs with each having 1 megabyte of capacity. The 68030 needs a 32 bit path for maximum speed so you needed 4 SIMMs to get the necessary 32 bit data path. This was the reason for the 4 or 8 meg memory requirements of the earlier boards.

Deciding to adopt the new 4 megabit chip created a new problem for GVP to solve. In order to use the new "4Mbit x 8" SIMMs would require a minimum DRAM

requirement of 32 megs. That would surely cause some problems. The advantage of 4 times as much memory in the same amount of space and the rapidly dropping price of DRAM chips was too much to ignore. So GVP decided to design a new SIMM module with a "by 32" organization. The older SIMMs have 30 connector pins. GVP's new SIMM design has 64 pins to provide the necessary data path. This new design caused another problem for GVP to worry about. GVP has boasted about the previously mentioned "Nibble Mode" as a speed advantage over competitors' boards. Without this type of memory how could GVP maintain their speed advantage? They decided to reduce DRAM access by one wait state and use faster DRAMs. 70ns replace 80ns in the 28mhz boards and 60ns replace 70ns in the 33mhz and 50mhz. They also added a "latched write through" feature for the new DRAMs which reduced memory writes by one CPU waitstate. Considering that 50mhz didn't support the "Burst" mode anyway, its benefits are the greatest. Redesigning their board to use the newer 4 megabit chips also meant redesigning existing memory chips to fit the boards as well. GVP has introduced what it calls "SIMM32/1MB-60" SIMMs. These provide the 32 bit data path and give a new lower memory requirement for GVP's boards. Now minimum memory requirement is 2 megs. This means lower cost for their boards than previously required with the 4 meg minimum. Though most of the early releases still have the 1 megabit chip SIMMs, so 4 megs is still minimum requirement for the moment. Due to PAL logic limitation, the 28mhz and 33mhz still have a maximum memory configuration of 8 megs on the GVP memory board. In the case of the 50mhz it depends on the revision number of the main board. Less than 7 means no more than 8 like the others. 7 or higher means a new max of 20 megs on board - a combination of 4 "SIMM32/1MB-60" and 4 "SIMM32/4MB-60". The 50mhz is looking better all the time.

It is obvious that GVP's modifications to their accelerator card were ready much sooner than their PR people were. Except for the mentioning of a 2meg intro board in their ads, no mention of these major changes have been mentioned anywhere. Even the box was the same as the one that my 28mhz version was enclosed in. The manual is unchanged and an addendum update had to be included to tell of all the changes to the manual. A new manual will be sent to me as soon as it's ready. Memory wasn't the only change to occur. As soon as I removed the board from the box visual differences were obvious. A silvery box now covers the

CPU and FPU. One flaw of GVP boards, though very minor, was the FCC class B certification for noise interference. I never had any problem with the 28mhz,

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but the little box is there to improve it. Many jumpers have been moved around on the board – those most needed are now more accessible. One modification that I noticed right away was that a large number of capacitors on the board were changed. On the original board the capacitors were of a style that had both connectors on one end and I noticed that every time that I touched the board I would bend one. I sure worried about breaking one off. On the newer boards the capacitors have a connection at each end and lay flat against the board firmly. No movement or snagging with these. The memory daughter board also looks very much different. The memory chip mounts have been moved from the end of the board to near center. Finally GVP now includes a back-plate to mount to the back of the chassis of the Amiga just like Commodore had on the A2620 card. I suppose that GVP deserves an award for most changed product.

Installation should have been no problem, but I had a problem. I had been noticing a problem of a delayed boot-up on a regular basis. Sometimes I couldn't get my computer to boot-up at all. Removal of the 28mhz card would clear up the problem every time. When I installed the 50mhz board the computer wouldn't even come on. The problem turned out to be a bad power supply. I had to wait 4 weeks for new one. During that time it was stock Amiga and 68000 all the way. Finally getting the 50mhz installed with a new power supply meant a big jump in performance – particularly the extra memory.

So how fast is the 50mhz GVP over a stock Amiga? How does over 21 times faster sound to you? Remember the term MIPS for measuring speed? (Millions of Instructions per Second). A stock Amiga runs at about .74 MIPS. The 28mhz GVP board gives an impressive 8.67 MIPS. The 50mhz GVP board delivers 15.22 MIPS. Compare this to the promised 20 to 27 MIPS, depending on the advertiser, for the 25mhz 68040 and you can see the reason for all the excitement. I used a disk archiving program called *Disk-Masher* to perform another speed test. Compressing a nearly full disk down to a respectful 548k using maximum compression mode of 4, the stock Amiga took 17 minutes 34 seconds to accomplish this. The 50mhz achieved the same results in compression as far as size, but it took only 1 minute 24 seconds. Even disk access has improved due to a program called SetCPU which maps the ROMs into the much-faster 32 bit memory board of the GVP accelerator card. The main thing holding back performance on many accelerator boards is the fact that most programs have yet to be written to take advantage of these newer CPUs. It is a tribute to Motorola and the Amiga that so many programs can run on so many configurations of the Amiga and accelerator boards. The only problem area to surface regularly has been games. With the addition of a switch connected to the proper jumper, the 68000 can be activated when needed. This is certainly one advantage over the 3000 which has no 68000. Of course activating the 68000 means that the memory and attached harddrive are no longer available either. So far that has not

bothered me at all though some people find this annoying. Booting up a game from disk is usually the only way to get to play these games anyway. What's the big deal?

As I had mentioned, I also ordered the harddrive setup that goes with the board. Ordering this gets you a Quantum AT/IDE drive and a ROM added to the main accelerator board. The AT/IDE is a new standard in harddrives quickly replacing the ST-506 which had been the standard in the IBM world and was the type of drive used by the older Amiga 2500. The AT/IDE is a much simpler setup than any other harddrive setup and apparently that is the reason for its current wave of popularity in the IBM world and compatibles. For me it was apparent that one thing was for sure – this thing is fast! I never knew that the Amiga could boot-up so fast. GVP advertises a transfer capability of 750k per second. I tested it with Disk-Speed 3.1 and I was able to get just over 615k using medium settings. I wonder what test GVP uses to get their advertised speed? Compare that to figures that were just over 245k for the 2090a and Rodine combination, and it's definitely moving right along. What was interesting to see were the other figures. See the comparison and make up your own mind. The 2090a is not all that bad after all – just a little slow. I decided to keep the 2090a and Rodine just for storage. It may be slow in the harddrive world, but it sure blows away a floppy drive.

Well, while we all wait for the 68040 to make its debut in the world of the Amiga, the 50mhz 68030 is the king of speed!

DiskSpeed 3.1 - Copyright (c) 1989,90 by MKSoft Development

Device: 2090a and Rodine 45 meg drive
 Comment 50mhz Test
 Test Intensity: Med Performance Stress: None

27 Files/s Create
 69 Files/s Open/Close
 215 Files/s Scan
 160 Files/s Delete
 903 Seek/Read

Buffer Size	512	4096	32768	262144
Bytes/s Create	27999	110603	165598	162196
Bytes/s Write	28873	129992	212959	245820
Bytes/s Read	123779	128766	212594	245820

Device: GVP AT/IDE and 40 meg Quantum
 Comment 50mhz Test
 Test Intensity: Med Performance Stress: None

23 Files/s Create
 45 Files/s Open/Close
 193 Files/s Scan
 248 Files/s Delete
 978 Seek/Read

Buffer Size	512	4096	32768	262144
Bytes/s Create	29579	167353	345921	491640
Bytes/s Write	29796	180037	421075	614268
Bytes/s Read	95381	184322	426088	615207

Surface Master

Mastering object attributes in Imagine

by Bill Raecke

Arguably the best ray-tracing program available for the Amiga, *Imagine* left out a couple of important features when they designed their product – they forgot to include an adequate manual and they forgot to include any examples on the distribution disk. This leaves a novice user with some problems. Their tutorial manual will lead you through simple examples (although sometimes a little too quickly), but when you actually go off on your own to design an object it can become a little difficult to get it to look the way you "imagine" it. Designing the object itself is normally not too difficult – but if you are wanting to design a crystal ball, what are the settings that will give you that crystal look? A quick look at the Attributes requester will likely leave you guessing. You have full control over Color, Reflect, Filter and Specular with 16,777,216 settings for each of those (256 for each of the red, green and blue components). You can also control Dithering, Hardness, Roughness and Shininess with 256 settings for each of those. You can set the Index of Refraction to any value. And you can map any object with up to four different Texture maps and four different Brushes. The choices are overwhelming.

So – back to the original question – how do I make a crystal ball? Common sense will tell me that it is "Hard". And I know that "Specularity" has to do with the little highlight where a spot of light reflects off the surface. But how about the other settings. What should the Index of Refraction be? *How Hard* is it? How much Shininess should I give it? Or do I use Reflect instead of Shininess? Does Filter do anything for me in this instance? Let's take a look at the *Imagine* manual. Under Index of Refraction it says that Crystal should have a value of 2.00. Now we're getting somewhere. Crystal should also be Shiny, right? Under the Shininess heading, the *Imagine* manual states "A high shininess setting gives objects a glossy, plastic appearance." That's all it says. Is that what I want? Only trial and error will tell.

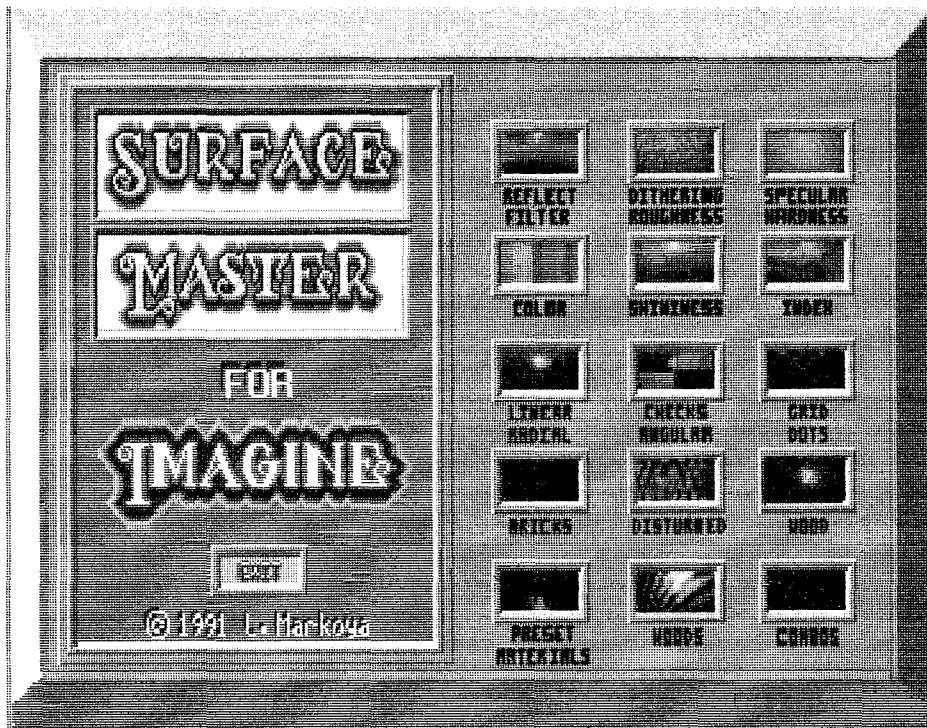
Enough picking on *Imagine*. That's not my intent. *Imagine* is setting new standards in the ray-trace field. All those complicated settings are what gives it the ability to produce all those realistic looking objects. I'm crazy about it.

All I'm trying to say is that a person has to spend a great deal of time with it to find out how to do some things he or she wants to do (or perhaps begin with a lot more basic knowledge than some of us have). That's where *Surface Master* comes in.

Surface Master is the product of a company by the name of Computer Imagery. It was put together by Louis Markoya, one of the known masters of *Imagine*. Simply put, Louis spent all that time finding out what the correct settings are for common materials so that the rest of us don't have to do it all over again. The question now is, what do you get for your money?

First off, you get a manual. It's not a large manual. It has the same dimensions as the *Imagine* manuals and it's only 15 pages long. But it's chock full of information. A couple of paragraphs ago I quoted a line from the *Imagine* manual describing shininess. Let me quote now from the *Surface Master* manual on the same subject.

"Shininess is a useful effect which applies a glossy look to the object. Different from Reflect, the object still maintains most of its original color even with high Shininess values, while still providing refractions. Shiny surfaces like plastic and polished metal are best rendered using Shininess as are reflective grounds or tiled floors. Even with Shininess parameters set at maximum values,



the object will not take on the look of its surroundings.

Shininess is effected by three parameters within the Attributes requester: Filter, Shininess and Index of Refraction. All affect the shininess of an object, with Index playing the greatest role..."

And the explanation continues. Now I know a little more than I did when I started. But there's more to *Surface Master* than just the manual. The second piece of the product is a series of pictures. If you click on the *Surface Master* icon, you will be shown a screen with 15 little windows. By clicking on one of these windows you can display a picture showing various settings of the attribute or texture in question. What Louis has done here is render a sphere at various settings and then combined them into a single picture so that we can see, side by side, what varying an attribute setting does to an object. I've got one small complaint here. The quality of the pictures is poor. They will give you an idea of what to expect from *Imagine*, but only an idea. The actual trace will look much better. Still, compared to the nothing I had before they are terrific.

And there's still more. The real clincher is that all the objects used to create the pictures described above are included on the disk. That means that if I want a crystal ball, all I need to do is load it from the disk. Or there's even a better way. Also included on the disk are attribute files for many of the objects. That means that if I decide to make a crystal cube rather than a crystal ball, I can simply design my cube and load the crystal attributes using the "Load" feature from the Attributes requester. By playing around with the supplied attribute files and objects - modifying them and then saving the modified attributes to disk - I can build myself a library of attributes.

The recommendation is obvious. It is certainly possible to reproduce what Louis Markoya has done in *Surface Master*. The question is, what is your time worth? Since *Surface Master* is available locally for about \$25 (user group price), the answer was easy for me. I think it's a bargain. I also think that anyone who owns *Imagine* should run out and buy it immediately. Oh yes - one more thing. For the record, the settings for crystal are:

	Value	Red	Green	Blue
Color		0	0	0
Reflect		0	0	0
Filter		255	255	255
Specular		255	255	255
Dithering	0			
Hardness	190			
Roughness	0			
Shininess	0			
Index of Refraction	2.00			

No Shininess?! I might never have gotten it!

Buy Local

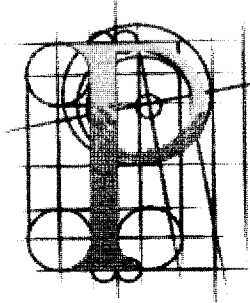
Dealers vs. Mail Order Houses by Walker Jackson

Since my move to El Paso my opinion of local dealers has changed much. While in Fort Worth I recall many conversations concerning the debate of where to buy hardware and software - from the local dealer or through the mail. The usual argument not to support your local dealer is that it is cheaper to buy from the mail order houses. While that statement may be true; it may not be in your best interest, the best interests of the local Amiga community, and surely not the best interests of the local dealer. Here in El Paso there is a small Amiga community and no dealers. There is a Central Point computer store which is supposed to sell Amigas; however, it is almost impossible to get the sales person to show you one, if they even know what you are talking about, and almost no Amiga software is on the shelves. There are Babbage's in El Paso and all have dropped the Amiga software lines from their stocks, though with some convincing they will order a program for you. There is one hardware dealer in El Paso who stocks Amigas, but they are not available to the general public - it is the PX on Fort Bliss. These Amigas are stocked not so much for the American market as for the large contingent of German officers and soldiers stationed here to train in the large Air Defense School at Fort Bliss, White Sands Missile Range, and McGregor Range. The closest real dealer is a one and one half to two hour drive in the city of Alamogordo, New Mexico. While the New Horizons dealer in Alamogordo is knowledgeable, helpful and has an excellent supply of hardware, software, and repair facilities they have little appeal for me. There is a gentleman in El Paso who sells software out of his house but this is little different from mail order.

I have come to find that local dealers have much to offer even if it is only to walk around the store lusting over the latest super-accelerator or fondling a great new software package while putting it through its paces on one of the store's machines. Let's be honest - while the Amiga is a rugged machine, something will eventually break and need to be fixed. Do I drive 2 hours away, leave the machine, wait days, drive back 2 hours to get it and see if it is really fixed? That is my only option.

I am not a dealer nor have I any interest in any dealers; but now that I now longer have the luxury of ready access to one it would seem that a dealer, any dealer, needs our support. We need him as much as he needs us. This is a symbiotic association with both sides of the equation benefiting from the relationship. While the mail may be cheaper (a point which cannot be often contested) you will eventually need a dealer; and, it is then that the few dollars difference in price is repaid in full.

[Submitted before the news of *Amazing's* closing ...ed]



Using PageStream

The Basics of Font Usage - Part 2
by Bill Raecke

This month continues our discussion of handling text in *PageStream*. But before we go too much further, let's get a few more of the basics out of the way. First on the agenda is "point sizes". This topic is slightly confusing because the term is used in two different ways. A standard Amiga font is commonly referred to in terms of its "point size". What the term applies to in this case is the number of vertical screen pixels that the font occupies. A standard Amiga font, as displayed on the Workbench, is 8 points. This means that there are eight scan lines used to display the font. If a display font such as this were printed it might be almost any size on paper depending on the settings in Preferences.

In *PageStream* the fonts are all outline fonts. They have no inherent point size whatsoever but are infinitely sizeable. Moreover, the size of the font as displayed on the screen is totally unimportant. In *PageStream*, as in other desktop publishing packages, the important thing is how big the font is when printed. In *PageStream*, when we specify a 10 point font, we want that font to be exactly 10 points on the paper. So what is a point? A point is 1/72 of an inch. To give you some idea what that means, if you have a nine-pin printer, your pins are spaced 1/72nd of an inch apart. A 10 point font will be 10/72 inches tall. There are a couple of more things you need to know though. Even though a 10 point font will occupy 10/72 inches, none of the individual letters will be that tall. A font is measured from the bottom the lowest letter (perhaps a "p" or a "g") to the top of the tallest letter (maybe a "t" or "h"). Sometimes there is spacing included in the font as well to separate one line from the next. In other words, your results may vary. The other thing to keep in mind is that point sizes apply to only the vertical dimension of the font. The horizontal size of a character will vary - first as a result of varying character widths (a "w" occupies more horizontal space than does an "i") and more importantly as a function of the font itself (some fonts are more spread-out than others).

Another important concept to understand is "leading". Leading is a term left over from the good-old-days when typesetting was done by hand. A strip of lead was used between rows of letters to space them apart. Leading then, simply refers to the space between two lines of text. The amount of leading, like font size, is referred to in terms of points - and *PageStream* supports two ways of dealing with it. "Auto-leading" is used to specify the number of points from the bottom of one line of text to the top of the next line. "Fixed-leading" specifies a set

number of points from the baseline of one line of text to the baseline of the next line. In other words, if we put our trusty 10 point font down on the screen and specify 2 point auto-leading, the results will be the same as if we specify 12 point fixed-leading. In both cases there will be two points between lines. The difference between the two methods will be apparent, however, if we put a larger font on one of our rows of text. In the case of auto-leading, there will still be the specified number of points between rows (2 points in our example). But in the case of fixed leading, the number of points allowed for each line will not change, regardless of how the size of the text on that line varies. So if we were to add a small section of a larger font, the line spacing on the page would not vary at all - the lines of text could even overlap.

As a general guide, body text (such as that which you are reading) should normally be from 9 points to 12 points. Leading should normally be 20% of the point size of the font for legibility. This newsletter uses a 9 point font with 2 point auto-leading.

Selecting Text Attributes

But enough of gross generalities for a while. This is supposed to be a guide for using *PageStream*. We need to know how to make our choices known. Time now for some *PageStream*-specific generalities (that's right - specific generalities). In general, you can tell *PageStream* that you want to do something to text in one of three ways. The first way is to select the "Text Tool" from the toolbox on the right-hand side of the screen. The "Text Tool" is the one with the letter "A". Just click on it with the left mouse button to select it. Then move the pointer to where you want to enter text and click again. Then select your font, point size and leading (and whatever other options you wish to select) and begin typing. The text you type will use the selected options. To change options anywhere in the document, simply select the desired attribute and continue typing. The new text will use the new attribute just selected. The second way to modify text attributes is used when we want to change text that has already been entered - but we just want to change some of our text. This is again accomplished with the "Text Tool". This time, highlight the text you wish to change by clicking on the spot where you want the changes to begin and, HOLDING THE LEFT MOUSE BUTTON, move the pointer to where you want the changes to end. This will highlight a section of text. Then simply select the desired attribute from the menu and the highlighted text will be

End of specific generalities. Maybe it's about time to get that text on the page. Select the "Text Tool". Click on a spot in the document where you want to begin typing. Now select "Fonts/Points" from the "Style" menu. This will bring up the font requester. On the left side is a list of the fonts that you have identified to the Font Manager with a proportional gadget for scrolling through the list. Click on the desired font. In the center of the window will appear a list of the styles available for this font. Some fonts will indicate only "Normal" or "Standard" – others will indicate that there are various other styles available such as "Bold" or "Italic". Click on the desired style. On the far right of the requester is the point size selector. By scrolling through the list of available point sizes, you will find that there are many sizes available, from 3 points to 216 points. What you need to know that is not all the point sizes you can choose from. They will usually do the trick, but if you need one that isn't on the list just type it into the small box above the list of fonts. Decimal points may be used to indicate fractions of points if desired. Or

Change Line/Character Spacing

Character

Line

0

Character Spacing

Line Spacing

0 pt

Auto Line Spacing

Fixed Leading

OK Cancel

The screenshot shows a 'Font' dialog box with the following details:

- Typeface:** A list box containing 'Sticks', 'Sydney', 'CS Symbol', 'Tekton', 'Thames', 'CS Times' (highlighted), 'ToulouseLautrec', 'CS Triumvirate', 'Tyne Unsl Ital', and 'UMBRAGE'. It has a vertical scrollbar on the right.
- Style:** A list box containing 'Normal' (highlighted), 'Bold', 'Italic', and 'Bold Italic'. It has a vertical scrollbar on the right.
- Point:** A list box containing '9', '10', '11', '12' (highlighted), '15', '18', '24', '30', '36', and '42'. It has a vertical scrollbar on the right.
- Buttons:** 'Manager', 'OK', and 'Cancel' buttons are located at the bottom.

proportions of the font. By entering "15,10 pt", for example, you would be telling the system to give you a 10 point font which has been stretched horizontally by 50%. Note that this does not mean that the characters will be 15 points wide – just that they will be 50% wider than they were originally designed to be when compared to their height.

We also talked about leading. To adjust the leading value select "Line/Char Spacing" from the "Format" menu. Another requester will pop up. On the top and toward the middle of the requester is a set of gadgets to adjust the space between characters. We'll cover that later in this article. On the left side of the requester is what we are looking for – a set of gadgets to adjust the leading value. It can be adjusted by clicking on the up or down arrows to increment the leading value in either direction or the desired value can simply be typed in. Decimal points can be used for fractions of points and negative leading values are OK here as well. One last thing – be sure to select either auto line spacing or fixed leading per our earlier discussion.

Once the selection is complete, click on the OK button and begin typing. That's all there is to it. The way we started this operation is by clicking our "Text Tool" on an empty portion of the document. Entering text in this manner is one of two ways to get text in

PageStream. Normally this method will be used sparingly for a couple of reasons. First, this method does not provide for importing text from another source. And second, typing text directly on the screen does not allow for such niceties as automatic word wrap. But there are good points as well and it can be very useful for things like titles. The major advantage provided by this function is its infinite text scaling capability. Once the text is typed onto the screen, the "Object Tool" can be selected. At the four corners and four sides of the text object will be little grab points. Those points can be dragged as any standard Amiga sizing gadget. Doing so will automatically scale the text to fit the size of the new box. This makes getting a font the exact size you want it for a special purpose a breeze. The other advantage provided by this method is related to text run-around. In *PageStream* any object can be designated to have text run around it. But text which has been placed on the page in this manner will be unaffected by text run-around.

So, if this method is only used occasionally, how is text normally handled? Normally, text is entered into a column – and the "Column Tool" is used to create that column. The "Column Tool" is the second gadget from the top on the left side of the toolbox. You select this gadget, click once where you want the upper left corner to be, and click once more where you want the lower right corner to be. Then select the "Text Tool" and click somewhere inside the column. Now you are ready to enter text as before (but this time with word wrap provided), or to import text from a word processor. Sizing a column will not change the size of the text but will simply cause the text to re-flow within the confines of the new column size.

Kerning and Character Spacing

OK. There's just one more thing I want to cover this month and then I'll be through. We've already talked about leading (line spacing). We probably also need to talk about character spacing. And the first concept I need to attempt to explain is "kerning". Kerning is not synonymous with character spacing but it does affect it. Everyone knows what a proportional font is. With proportional fonts the space allotted to each character will vary according to the width of the character itself. But kerning goes one step further. Kerning allows portions of characters to overlap one another. This will normally result in text which is more legible – particularly

AW

Un-Kerned Text

AW

Kerned Text

at large point sizes. There are a set of "kerning pairs" defined in many fonts that tell *PageStream* which characters to overlap and by how much. To kern a section of text, simply select the text to be kerned using one of the

methods described above (either highlight the text with the "Text Tool" or select the block of text with the "Object Tool") and then select "Batch Kern" from the "Text" menu.

But there are certain instances where kerning will not provide the necessary adjustment. For example, if I were to place two different sized characters side by side the space between them might make the text difficult to read. In that instance I can use character spacing to

Title

*Character Space
Not Adjusted*

Title

*Character Space
Adjusted*

adjust things. Just by highlighting the characters I wish to adjust and using the same "Line/Char Spacing" requester described above, I can move the selected characters as close (or as far apart) as I desire. Like everything else, this effect can be applied to an entire block of text if desired.

I think that's about all I have to say for this month. Next month we will conclude our discussion of handling text in *PageStream*.

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Definition For The Month

Amoebit: A cross between an amoeba and a rabbit. It can multiply and divide at the same time.

Amiga Library News

Public domain and shareware picks
by Bill Raecke

FixIntuition

As the name of this program implies, there is a bug in Intuition that needs squashing. The bug will appear if you are running two interlaced screens on your system at the same time. If you do this, at some point, when you are bringing one of those interlaced screens to the front, your system will crash. I'll try to describe what happens. When you bring the interlaced screen to the front it will appear as though the scan lines have been stretched vertically. The bottom of your screen will be somewhere down on the floor under the computer table. After this, your computer will refuse to recognize your existence. Any tasks that are running will continue to run but the keyboard and the mouse are dead. It's reboot time.

FixIntuition solves this problem. It's a little hack that you add to your startup-sequence. It runs quietly in the background monitoring and correcting whatever it is that Intuition is not keeping up with. The (very important) result is that you will no longer experience this kind of system crash. The author is unknown but he has my thanks, whoever he is. Get it. It's on MCCC-A_279.

Cache-Disk by Terry Fisher

Cache-Disk is a little utility to help your floppy drives run just a little faster. There are several things out there that try to do the same thing. *AddBuffers* is an AmigaDOS command that is probably in most startup-sequences. *AddBuffers* helps but it doesn't do a great job. Better solutions are *FACC-II* and *BlitzDisk*. Both of these are commercial products. Both are better than *AddBuffers* because they are intelligent about what they cache.

Some explanation about AmigaDOS is probably in order here. Anyone who has ever used an Amiga floppy disk has been amazed at how long it can take to get a direc-

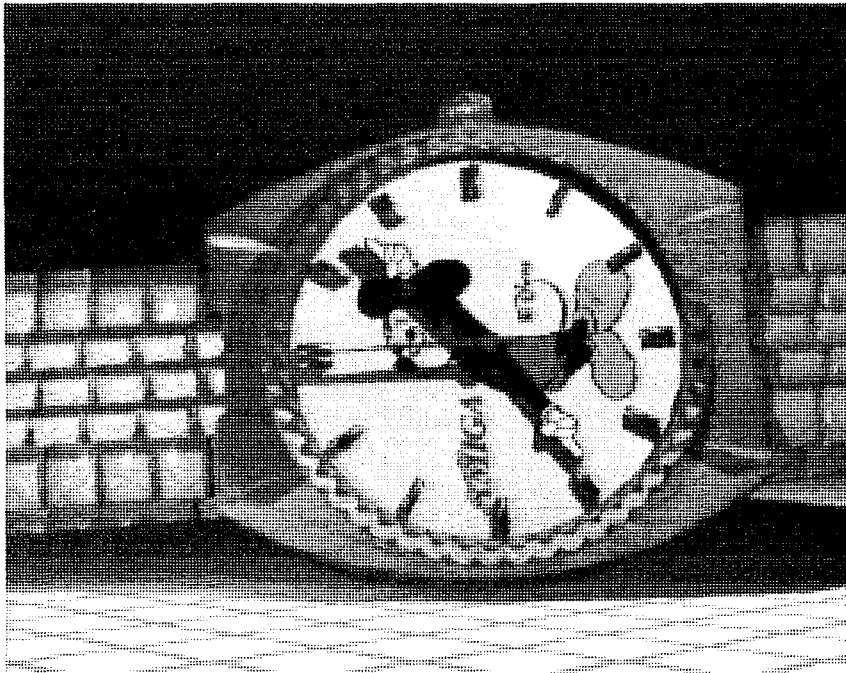
tory listing. The reason for this is that AmigaDOS departed from the normal directory structure used on other computers. On other computers the directory of the disk is stored at a certain position on the disk. A certain track or number of tracks are set aside to hold nothing but directory information. The advantage here is that, since the location is known by the system and all directory information is limited to certain locations, the information can be read in very quickly. The disadvantage is that the number of entries is limited by the amount of space set aside for the directory information. AmigaDOS went their own way. There is just one block set aside on a floppy as a starting position. Directory entries can be stored at any position on the floppy and AmigaDOS keeps track of them by using a system of pointers. The advantage here is that there is NO LIMIT to the number of directory entries on a disk. That makes the handling of larger devices a snap. The downside is that it takes the system longer to locate all those directory entries that are stored at various locations on the disk.

Back to our original discussion. I said before that *FACC-II* and *BlitzDisk* are intelligent about what they cache. What I meant was that they give preference to directory information. Once a directory entry has been read, it stays around a lot longer in memory so that if you re-read the directory again a disk access may not even be necessary.

Cache-Disk lies somewhere between the commercial

products and *AddBuffers*. What *Cache-Disk* does is buffer entire tracks from the disk. When AmigaDOS reads information from a floppy, it always reads an entire track at a time. But it's only looking for a specific block on that track - so it reads the block. It might then go to another track, get a block and then come back to the first track again. But by this time the first track has been flushed from

→ Page 15



Mo' Better Memory

Expanding the possibilities - Part 1
C64/128 information from Foster McCowan

To those of the computing public who have never owned a Commodore 64/128, or to those millions that under-utilized them or purchased them to just play games with them, the 64/128 computer remains an enigma. Unknown to those (under) users are a myriad of productivity uses. Many believe that productivity is strictly the domain of high-end so-called "professional" systems such as IBM, MAC, and Amiga computers. It's understandable if your leanings are similar though, because for some time now this machine has been marketed as a game machine and, quite frankly, it performs admirably. However, this computer certainly has its advantages as a productivity machine and in several categories (not the least of which is price) compares favorably with its more heralded competitors. The 16 color video native to the 64/128 is superior to the IBM CGA standard, matches well with its EGA standard and doesn't require a graphics card. Its eight sprites, which enable animation and movement, etc., beat the IBM PC, XT and some AT's hands down because these machines don't have that capability. The low-end MAC computer (in MAC's case that means under \$3,000) presents no comparison in either of those categories. The 64/128's three-voice SID presented the computer world to sound, and even now most IBM'ers have to add chips or boards or adapters to make their machines do so much as beep, often times at the cost of a new C-64. You'll notice I didn't compare Commodore Amiga in these comparisons because I feel the Amiga is a superior machine (your neighbors in this magazine will appreciate this) in these performance areas.

There exist two areas however, where our 8-bit machines fare poorly - memory capacity and speed. No matter how you slice it, there is a big difference between 64K and 640K. Or 1mhz and 12-25mhz. Even doubling that number to 2mhz (which is essentially the Commodore 128) our machines fall short. These shortcomings provide fertile grounds for innovative engineers, however, and for the millions of us who pushed and continue to push our machines to the limit. These engineers have come to the fore with creative solutions for most of our hardware problems including, but not limited to, memory capacity and speed. Commodore users have had at their disposal for four years counting, RAM Expansion Units (REU's), memory boards/cartridges such as Quick Brown Boxes, and various peripherals that were developed to overcome the limitations of our machines. These are not the only categories and/or products, but because of space and time restraints, we shall focus the scope of our discussion to them. RAM Expansion Units (or REU's as they are more commonly known) are probably the single most important add-on peripheral in the Commodore 8-bit line of

computers. Aside from the obvious increase in memory, another reason to consider the purchase of a REU is its increase in speed. Longtime Commodore users have wondered for years that if you can create memory expansion, why not just upgrade the memory of the 8-bit line of computers? The reason is this: The 6510 or 8510 CPU chip, the brain of the C64 and C128 computer, can access only 64K of memory at a time, although some engineers have found clever ways to get around this limit

RAM Expansion Units... are probably the single most important add-on peripheral in the Commodore 8-bit line...

and make more than 64K available to the user. However, the CPU isn't the only chip that needs access to computer memory. Because the VIC chip (which provides all 40 columns of video support) lacks its own memory, it has to "steal" some temporarily from the CPU. This periodic theft is called direct memory access, or DMA. While the VIC chip is the only built-in device to use DMA, external devices such as the RAM expansion unit make use of it. A big question among potential purchasers of RAM expansion is program compatibility. Although the expander isn't 100% compatible with all software, arguably some of the best programs available for the 64/128 are: *The Write Stuff*, *Fleet Systems* series, *Superbase*, the *Paperback 128* series, *Timeworks* series, the *Pocket* series and the *GEOS* operating system. Additionally, new hardware by Creative Micro Devices has recently been released that promises to make all software compatible with the expansion units.

There are at least four models in this category that Commodore computerists should be familiar with, all of which are distinctly different. They are the 1764, which expands memory on the 64 by adding 256K; the 1700 which expands the 128 by 128K, the 1750 which expands the 128 by adding 512K, and GeoRAM, a 512K expansion unit made specifically for the GEOS operating system which brings total memory to 578k.

The 1764, 1700 and 1750 Units

The 1764 RAM expansion unit, specifically developed for the Commodore 64, adds some interesting capabilities to the 64. The 1764 carton contains the 256K RAM unit, a diskette full of support programs, and a larger, beefier power supply to replace the stock one that came with your 64. This power supply is the same size as the hefty C128 power supply. It's necessary because the unit draws too

much power for the normal 64 power supply (which is notoriously underpowered anyway) to handle. Once you plug it in, you will probably never again have any power supply related problems with your C64, which in itself is worth \$30-\$40 worth of the unit's asking price. Although the RAM unit increases total C64 ram capacity to 320K, it is not directly accessible to the C64 for programs or data storage - you have to do it under program control. You can write your own programs to access the RAM via DMA (Direct Memory Access), or you can use the RAMDOS program, which makes the 1764 emulate a Commodore disk drive. A RAM disk gives you most of the advantages of having two drives, plus absolutely incredible speed, but you first have to transfer files into the RAM from your floppy, and after you've finished, you have to save your files to disk before you power down (although new peripherals have been developed of late to solve that problem). However, in between the loading and the saving you will experience the fastest file access available on a 64, because you don't encounter the burdensome disk access that you normally would.

The 1700 and 1750 units are virtually identical with one very big difference: capacity and compatibility. The 1700 and the 1750 REU's developed for the Commodore 128, contain 128K and 512K, bringing total onboard RAM to 256K and 640K respectively. Again, the big thing here folks is absolutely lightning speed. Although the 1764 is for the C64, and the 1700/1750 is for the 128, users can still use a 1700 or 1750 expanded in 64 mode. It is also possible to convert a 1764 to 512K but that information is best left for another article.

GeoRAM

GeoRAM is the newest kid on the block. Making its debut in December 1989, it has proven to be a "must-have" for GEOS users that have not already made the expansion plunge. GeoRAM isn't meant to replace your REU, unless you want to move up to 512K from the 256K 1764. Rather, it's more of an option for those who waited too long to buy one of Commodore's (1700, 1750, 1764) units, since they are somewhat difficult to find. As with its brethren, it easily fits into the 64/128 cartridge ports. Its greatest strength is that it is not only drives GEOS on the 128, but also on the 64 without your needing to add a heavy-duty power supply. It's able to do this because of its use of low-power CMOS chips that don't put a strain on the stock power configuration for the 64/128. Because of internal differences between GeoRAM and the REU, it won't run non-GEOS programs in its stock configuration. It comes with its own GEOS system disk and is not battery backed, so you have to save your files before powering down. Again, I consider these problems a small price to pay for the advantages it gives you. According to *Computer Shopper* magazine "RAM expanded Commodore Machines, running under the GEOS Kernel are nearly as fast and flexible as the powerhouse MAC's, ST's, Amigas, and PC's." I think that about says it all.

To be continued next month...

memory and it has to be read from the disk again. What if the first track could be kept in memory so that another disk access was not necessary? That is the function that *Cache-Disk* provides. You specify the number of tracks that are to be kept in memory... five seems to be a good number. The impact on directory reads is dramatic. There are just a couple of drawbacks. First, of course, it uses memory. Second, there is no intelligence used as to what tracks to save in memory. If you read a directory, load a fairly large program, and then read the directory again, you will find that the second directory read takes just as long as the first one did since all the tracks holding directory information have been flushed from memory and replaced with the tracks holding the program data that you just loaded. I don't intend that as a criticism of the program - it is merely an explanation. If you are still using AddBuffers you need to use this program. It has been released as shareware and it can be found on MCCC-A_280.

Watch by Jody Reimers

"Watch" is a ray-traced image done in *Imagine* by Jody Reimers, MCCC member and scoreboard artist/animator for the Dallas Mavericks (using Amiga's, of course). The reproduction here doesn't do it justice - you need to get the original. And for more information and images/objects for *Imagine* and other 3-D modeling packages, call Jody's BBS - Studio Amiga. His BBS is designed for people active in ray-tracing. The phone number is 817-467-3658. In the meantime, you'll find Watch on MCCC-A_281.

SuperView ver 3.1 by David Grothe

SuperView has long been one of the best (if not THE best) picture viewing utilities around. Lately though it has fallen somewhat behind the times because of its inability to handle some of the more recent IFF formats - notably SHAM pictures and Dynamic HiRes. This latest release takes care of those problems and moves *SuperView* back to the top of the list. SHAM pictures are now handled internally and Dynamic HiRes pictures are handled by automatically calling the Dyna-Show utility. Here is a list of some of the program's features:

- Supports all display modes
- Provides automatic overscan support
- Will show multiple files or an entire directory with a single command
- Supports color cycling
- Will display animations (anim 5 format, i.e. Deluxe Paint III)
- The program is "pure" and can be made resident
- Allows scrolling around in a large bitmap

If you don't currently use this program you need to give it a try. If you are using it you need this update. It's released as shareware and it's on MCCC-A_282.

MEDIEVAL WARRIORS

review by Harold Williams

A few months ago I spent some time as a beta tester for Scott Lamb's newest strategy game, *Medieval Warriors*. Merit Software is distributing the game and it is now shipping. My reward for spending several hours being trounced by Scott's computer was a free copy of the game.

The game disk is not copy protected, so you can make a back-up. *Medieval Warriors* can be installed on a hard disk. A hard disk installation program is included on the disk. Installation instructions are also included in the manual. Scott uses a manual-based password protection scheme instead of on-disk copy protection. The password lookup is easier than most because the lines in the manual are numbered and you are only required to enter the first letter of the word.

The game consists of a battle between two small armies of men armed with ancient weapons. Each warrior may have a sword, knife, ax and bow. Some warriors have a large supply of weapons, and some have very few. Each warrior has a name and special characteristics. Being successful at this game means learning these characteristics and making the best use of your warriors' abilities. Each warrior has different abilities relating to movement, use of weapons and stamina (hit points). The two armies are equally matched. It is important in game play to understand both the abilities of your own men and those of your opponent. The battle consists of each army taking turns for movement of the warriors and attacking. The game ends when one army is completely destroyed or concedes the game.

Medieval Warriors offers three different game options. First, you can simply play against the computer. The computer can be told to play at a novice, expert or master level. A novice computer opponent is difficult to defeat if you are a novice player. But after a few games this level becomes playable. The expert level will continue to offer a serious challenge even after you have developed a lot of skill at this game. The master level is far beyond my capabilities. The second (and third) way to play *Medieval Warriors* is with a human opponent. Two players can play against each other on the same machine or via a modem. The software has all the controls you need to dial and make connection. You also have a small chat window to allow conversation (or harassment) during the game.

There are many game options to provide variety of play. There are four different battlefields. Each battlefield has four different scenarios. Play can be done in a single-attack or double-attack mode. Game play is also controlled by a timer. Each turn can be restricted to as little as 30 seconds or as much as 600 seconds. Games in progress can be saved and then completed at a later time. In short, there is enough variety to keep you coming back.

GEOS NEWS

Info from Foster McCowan

As you read in "Chapter News" in the March issue, the Arlington / Grand Prairie chapter's GEOS night was a smashing success. We solved many problems and created an ongoing dialogue to deal with GEOS problems and questions as they arise. What became painfully clear, however, is that there are a significant number of users for whom GEOS is not simple to operate. The most prominent questions surround the installation of the operating system and the initial operating sequences. It's real simple folks, **YOU MUST READ THE MANUAL!** Although GEOS is extremely intuitive (it's one of the simplest around), you have to remember that this is an operating system, not just a set of programs. So please, spend some time and actually read the first chapter, do the tutorials, and become an avid GEOS fanatic.

GeoPublish was the "star" at the March meeting on 3/12. The uninitiated discovered one of the most powerful programs ever developed for Commodore's 8-bit line, while becoming familiar with Postscript fonts and object-oriented art.

Everything you always wanted to know about RAM expansion is what awaits us in May, replete with special guest Mike Montgomery of MCS Services (this is the company that expands the expanders). Again, the entire Metroplex is invited to come see, hear, touch and smell RAM expansion.

A number of you in the MCCC own or use early versions of GEOS. If you want the ultimate in Commodore computing, you need version 2.0 to get the full impact of what GEOS is all about. A call to Angie McKenna of the customer service dept of *GeoWorks* gave the following upgrade information. To upgrade to GEOS 2.0, send \$25.00, shipping and handling is included, along with the cover of your 1.xx series GEOS manual (you'll receive a complete package including manuals etc.) to:

Berkeley Softworks Fulfillment Center
5334 Sterling Ctr Dr.
Westlake Village, Ca 91361
Customer Service Phone 415-644-0926

If you are not presently using GEOS but want to start, you can find GEOS at the Electronics Boutique, Software Etc., Babbages and Budget Computers in Arlington. If you can't find the selection you're looking for, you can order directly from Berkeley Softworks by calling 1-800-772-0001.

Note to all MCCC Amiga Users: In the March 1991 issue of *Computer Currents* magazine is a long "letter to the editor" extolling the Amiga's virtues penned by myself. The point of the letter was to encourage *Computer Currents* magazine to develop an Amiga section. Write or phone *Computer Currents* to let them know you want it.

Amiga By-The-Loop

Garry Wordelman

At our April Meeting, we had three very interesting presentations. Dave Owens gave a demo of the April ShareWare program, called *DFC*. This is a copy utility which allows one to format a disk or copy a disk to as many as four drives at one time. You will find it on our library SuperDisk SD-Diskutil as *DFC* by

package will give video graphics buffs and artists a much expanded capability.

The always-impressive and talented Scott Lamb gave a demonstration of Commodore's new CDTV system. This is a CD-ROM system using the basic guts of an Amiga 500 as the driver for a compact disc player and other audio and video devices to create a new multimedia entertainment system. It has the capability of playing

John Rainard and Ned Kelly for winning our door prizes of T-shirts donated by Amazing Computers. I hope to see you at our next meeting on Tuesday, May 14.

Amiga Central

Harold Williams

The April meeting of Amiga Central featured Bill Raecke

CHAPTER NEWS

Tomas Rokicki of Radical Eye Software. Be sure you use version 4.0 instead of version 5.0 (which was created by someone other than the original programmer). Version 5.0 has caused some copy problems that other club members have discovered while using it. If you find it useful, don't forget to donate to our ShareWare Fund.

David Johnson of Amazing Computers gave a demonstration of DCTV by Digital Creations. DCTV is a video capture and display system which allows you to create images in 16.4 million colors on your Amiga and display them with a composite monitor or output device. You can actually take a video source image, alter it with a paint program and generate the output to a video recorder or TV. Input sources could be a video camera or tape. This

standard music CD's and displaying video images which exist on a few available disks. There is at least one game disk available with several board games playable in a choice of different languages (both written and spoken). This is one of Scott's creations. In addition we saw a disc with children's stories including pictures and speech. CDTV is designed to expand the range of entertainment and information available to the average home user. Things like a complete encyclopedia set, the Bible (old and new testament), world history with pictures and sound samples, or complete courses in any topic you can name, as well as any computer game at your fingertips are just a few possibilities. I was thoroughly impressed.

Congratulations are in order for

demonstrating *PageStream* v2.1 (Soft-Logik Publishing Corporation). *PageStream* is an incredibly powerful desktop publishing package. Bill showed us all of the major features and then demonstrated some of the special tricks he uses in producing this newsletter. This was a terrific show. Thanks Bill.

Before the main event we saw the new Todd Rundgren video *Change Myself*. In fact we watched it a couple of times. This video was produced using ten Amiga 2500s and ten of NewTek's Video Toasters. The music world may never be the same. We also looked at Tomas Rokicki's freely distributable disk copier, *DFC*. *DFC* is indispensable for copying standard disks. *DFC* can be found in the club library, in the SuperDisk collection and on the MCCC BBS.

This month we are scheduled to

Coming In May

AmigaCentral

**CanDo
Ver 1.5**

Amiga West

**CDTV
DCTV**

**Arlington /
Grand Prairie**

**Cataloging /
Using the Library /
Organizing Disks /
Disk Utilities**

see *CanDo*. INOVAtronics has just released an upgrade to this remarkable software authoring tool. If you've never seen *CanDo* or have questions about it, this will be your chance. The program will include a complete overview of *CanDo's* capabilities and demonstrations of several applications created using *CanDo*. The applications will range from a paint program for children to a sophisticated home budget package.

and import picture/clip files. His skill with PS is only matched by his attention to detail in creating this newsletter. I'm sure Bill's demo is why the crowd stayed, in spite of the bad weather.

The next meeting will be May 9, at 7:30pm. Dave Johnson, of Amazing Computers in Fort Worth, will demo CDTV and DCTV. See you there.

[Editor's note: Due to the recent closing of Amazing Computers the

gracious use of the Stoneridge Home Owners' Association Clubhouse for the past year. It has been an unusually appropriate and congenial place to meet and the members appreciate the opportunity for the use of the clubhouse.

The May program is a homogenizing mix: Cataloging, how to use the club library disks, organizing your home disks and disk utilities. The meeting place is the Grand Prairie Library (right beside

CHAPTER NEWS

Amiga West John Belyeu

The Amiga West Chapter met on April 11; even with the thunderstorm, there was still a strong turnout.

The big news for the meeting was the much awaited MCCC Spring Thing, A Picnic in the Park on Saturday, May 11. Everyone needs to bring their own meat to eat and condiments and the club will provide beer, soft drinks, plates, plasticware, etc. Please remember not to bring any glass (coke bottles, etc.), as per the park rules. Boats and other water toys are welcome.

We shared rumors/facts about upcoming equipment and software. The most interesting rumor was my confusion of the Amiga 500 and 2000 creating the new Amiga 5000. That should have the rumor mill working overtime.

The highlight of the meeting was Bill Raecke's presentation of *PageStream* (PS) 2.1, a powerful desktop publisher. Fate would have it that he starts his presentation just as the lightening and thunder start. I counted the seconds between the flashes and the thunder only to make myself nervous, fearing a lightning strike would take out Bill's equipment. If he was worried, he didn't show it, because he continued with the demo. He showed us how PS could easily resize/reshape text

May meeting topic may be subject to change. Also please note that the May meeting will be in a new location. Contact Jack Smith for more information.]

Arl / Grand Prairie Eddie Allen

President Glen Herring did a very creditable presentation discussing options on Ram Expansion and explaining which disk drive matches which ram expansion etc. He substituted for the guest speaker who was unable to make the April meeting. The members participated and all thoroughly enjoyed the program.

The Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter wishes to thank Gary, Sherry and Jeff Alexander for the

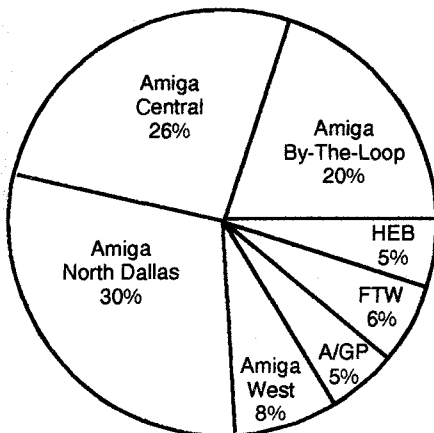
the police station) on Conover Drive in Grand Prairie. See you there May 14th.

Fort Worth Julia Sookma

In spite of high winds and heavy rains, the Fort Worth Chapter was able to meet this past April 13. Several announcements were made, most important of which is that there WILL be a chapter meeting on May 11. For those interested, the MCCC Spring Thing picnic will be held the same day, but we want to assure our chapter members that we will be offering you the opportunity to meet on our normal meeting day.

A demonstration on the club library catalog disk was presented by Donald Tate (former Chapter Librarian). This demonstration stirred the interest of several members so that they got copies of the catalog disks. One of our members informed us that he used the Tax Program (available in the Club library) and it worked well for him. This same member reported that he found some excellent prices on some used Commodore hardware from some local merchants. So if you are interested, or know someone who is, come talk to our pricing scouts at our next meeting.

We look forward to seeing everyone on May 11 at 1:30 pm at the West Berry Church of Christ on 2701 West Berry. See you there!



The Fine Print

The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

Statement of Purpose: The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club is a not-for-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education, and to the use of Commodore computers in the home, at school, and in business.

Legal Stuff: The MCCC is not connected with Commodore Business Machines, Inc. Commodore and Commodore product names (PET, CBM, VIC, C64, C128, and Amiga) are registered trademarks of Commodore, Inc.

Meetings and Membership: Our meetings are open to all. Family membership dues are \$20 per year or \$12 for six months, and entitle the member to a monthly mailed copy of the MCCC News, free access to the club's extensive public domain and shareware software library, and discounts at many area merchants. An additional \$12 annual fee provides access to the MCCC multi-user Bulletin Board System.

The MCCC News

Copyright Information: Material printed in the MCCC News is not copyrighted unless so noted. Articles may be reprinted or otherwise distributed by other user groups or by individuals who may find it helpful as long as proper credit is given to the author and to the MCCC.

Advertising: The MCCC News accepts two kinds of advertising. Member ads are those which are submitted by a member and which are not of a commercial nature. There is no charge for member ads. Commercial ads are those which advertise multiple like items for sale. Rates for camera-ready commercial ads are as follows for a single month or (consecutive three months): Full Page - \$36 (\$96); Half Page - \$18 (\$48); Quarter Page - \$12 (\$32); Business Card - \$6 (\$16). Materials to be inserted will cost \$.08 per copy (duplication not included) and must be inserted into all newsletters for the month.

Articles: Members are encouraged to submit articles. Articles should be submitted as ASCII text. They may be uploaded to the MCCC BBS, to StarText, or on disk. If these methods are not possible, I will, as a last resort, accept printed articles. If graphics need to be included they may be submitted as Amiga IFF files, PageStream structured drawings, or, again as a last resort, printed output.

Deadline: The deadline for submissions to the MCCC News is the Monday following the third Saturday of each month. Payment must accompany all ad copy. Make checks payable to MCCC and mail to P.O. Box 813, Bedford, Texas 76095.

Extra Copies: Extra Copies of the MCCC News may be obtained for \$1 per copy. Orders should be forwarded to the club along with the required fee by the regular newsletter deadline.

Normal Meeting Schedule

1st Saturday	MCCC Board of Directors
1st Saturday	HEB Chapter
2nd Tuesday	Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
2nd Tuesday	Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
2nd Thursday	Amiga West Chapter
2nd Saturday	Fort Worth Chapter
2nd Saturday	Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop
3rd Wednesday	Amiga North Dallas Chapter
3rd Thursday	Amiga Central Chapter

SIGS

Programmer SIG	Kevin Wambgan	214-221-8652
VidSIG	Jack DeTore	817-275-3762

MCCC Board of Directors

President	Craig Bird	817-540-3360
Vice President	Ned Kelly	817-277-5825
Treasurer	Harold Williams	817-483-0537
Secretary	John Malmstrom	817-282-6158
Librarian	Gary Campbell	817-297-4125
(C64/128 help)	Joe Ostrokol	817-534-1990
Education Chair	David Anspach	214-438-5684
BBS Coordinator	Okley Moss	817-282-7751
Newsletter Editor	Bill Raecke	817-465-2014
Past President	Ned Kelly	817-277-5825
BBS Numbers	817-268-4191	817-268-4196

MCCC Chapter Officers

Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter

President	David Owens	817-577-2304
Vice President	Barbara Cramer	817-284-3565
Treasurer	Bruce Nelson	817-498-0899
Secretary	Garry Wordelman	817-281-7457
Librarian	Gary Campbell	817-297-4125

Amiga Central Chapter

President	Ray Howard	214-660-4819
Vice President	Harold Williams	817-483-0537
Treasurer	Bill Raecke	817-465-2014
Secretary	David Campbell	214-660-1646
Librarian	Ned Kelly	817-277-5825

Amiga North Dallas Chapter

President	Craig Bird	817-540-3360
Vice President	Danny White	214-422-7131
Treasurer	Forrest McKinney	214-530-4589
Secretary	Genny White	214-422-7131
Librarian	Wm. Dockendorf	214-407-0564

Amiga West Chapter

President	Jack Smith	817-924-9289
Vice President	John Belyeu	817-367-0264
Treasurer	Wayne Brodnax	817-244-0828
Secretary	Ben Clingerman	817-346-7266
Librarian	Fred Sagor	817-232-8820

Arlington-Grand Prairie Chapter

President	Glen Herring	817-572-0489
Vice President	Blake Brown	214-641-0424
Treasurer	Jim Souba	817-561-1318
Secretary	Dorothy Gates	214-262-7884
Librarian	Eddie Allen	214-259-1741

Fort Worth Chapter

President	John Sookma	817-293-8691
Vice President	John Sookma	817-293-8691
Treasurer	Julia Sookma	817-293-8691
Secretary	Ellen Triplett	817-295-5709
Librarian	James Dunnam	817-923-6153

Hurst-Euless-Bedford Chapter

President	Jesse Carden	214-890-0426
Vice President	Jon Moreland	214-579-1293
Treasurer	Bill Howe	817-577-3898
Secretary	Robyn Wilson	817-282-3458
Librarian	Bill Worthington	817-834-6150

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 9 Amiga West Chapter
NEW MEETING PLACE !!
CONTACT JACK SMITH FOR INFO
Jack Smith, 817-924-9289

May 11 **MCCC PICNIC IN THE PARK**
Silverlake Campground Pavilion
Lake Grapevine
Craig Bird, 817-540-3360

May 11 Fort Worth Chapter
1:30 pm - West Berry Church of Christ
2701 West Berry, Fort Worth
John Sookma, 817-293-8691

May 11 Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop
1:30 pm - Grand Prairie Public Library
Conover Drive, Grand Prairie
Jerry Hiatt, 817-649-1358

May 14 Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 pm - N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills
David Owens, 817-577-2304

May 14 Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
7:00 pm - Grand Prairie Public Library
Conover Drive, Grand Prairie
Glen Herring, 817-572-0489

May 15 Amiga North Dallas Chapter
7:30 pm - Richardson Civic Center
411 West Arapaho, Richardson
Craig Bird, 817-540-3360

May 16 Amiga Central Chapter
7:30 pm - Arlington Community Center
2800 S. Center, Arlington
Ray Howard, 214-660-4819

Jun 1 MCCC Board of Directors
10:00 am - N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills
Craig Bird, 817-540-3360

Jun 1 Hurst-Euless-Bedford Chapter
1:30 pm - Hurst Recreation Center
Mary Drive South of Pipeline, Hurst
Jesse Carden, 214-890-0426

June Newsletter Deadline - May 20

MCCC NEWS

Metroplex Commodore Computer Club
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